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**Portraits of Scottish Professional Men in London c.1760-1830:  
Careers, Connections and Reputations**

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The changing identity of professional men c.1760 to 1830 in such areas of life as public conduct, appearance and demeanour, patronage connections and relationships with clients, was a subject of debate within British society and even conflict within the professions.<sup>i</sup> Much of the debate was focussed on London, a city of migrants, and on the London market place for technical expertise and knowledge, where innovations in the professions were distilled, where patrons and publishers were found and powerful professional networks and organizations were forged.<sup>ii</sup> In an age that was much concerned with physical appearance and manners, physiognomy and phrenology, portraits on public display contained important information on professional as well as personal identities.

Portraiture flourished in the long eighteenth century, there were numerous places where portraits could be seen and from mid-century there was a massive output of engraved portraits of professional men for use as room decoration, for portfolio collection, for extra-illustrating historical texts and biographical accounts, or for the frontispieces to professional publications.<sup>iii</sup> London-based engravers and print publishers, often working

in conjunction with portrait artists, dominated the production of engraved portraits.<sup>iv</sup> All were eager to find suitable subjects for a flourishing market in commercially produced prints, though many engraved portraits were privately produced and distributed. From the subjects' viewpoint, an engraved portrait, whether commercial or private, was usually produced as a mark of success at a key career moment, at retirement or at death. They were gifted to colleagues and family members, friends and patrons, and were collected and displayed by individuals and institutions. The contents of an engraved portrait – clothing, facial expression, accoutrements and setting – were carefully chosen because such images were a significant medium through which identity and aspirations could be performed. The connection between a portrait and a career event or lifetime of achievement was made explicit by the inclusion of text in the print.

Most studies of professional portraits have focused on particular groups or institutions, or on famous individuals. Jordanova has explored the character and role of original portraits in the medical profession and she has also examined portrait reproduction in the form of engravings and busts with reference to the career and changing identity of Dr Richard Mead and, more recently, though as yet unpublished, William Harvey.<sup>v</sup> Celebrity architects have formed the subject of close scrutiny, such as James Gibbs, who was a master at managing his own public image and reputation in the early eighteenth century through prints and strategic bequests of busts to public institutions; or Robert Adam, who was depicted in several versions of Tassie medallion portraits.<sup>vi</sup> Military and naval heroes have generated an interest<sup>vii</sup> and also satirical representations of the famous or scandalous.<sup>viii</sup> Recent scholarship has stressed the importance of portraits of this type in

the cultivation of a visually literate public sphere driven by a collective preoccupation with fashionable novelty and obsessed with national celebrities.<sup>ix</sup> Yet for every celebrity portrait or satire produced and displayed in London, or in such regional centres as Edinburgh, there were many more portrait images of modestly successful professional men who commanded interest and esteem, not for reasons of novelty or fashion, for many were elderly or dead by the time a portrait was published, but because they represented traditional institutions and authority in the face of change and through their long and often unglamorous careers, they embodied values such as integrity and public service.<sup>x</sup> Many were Scots in London, a famously ambitious group, and it is some of these, a celebrity ‘b-list’, successful in their day but soon forgotten, that feature in this essay.<sup>xi</sup>

As Jordanova has warned, it is difficult to ‘read’ an image that was generated in the past as if it were text and to do so relies on an understanding of the processes of production and display and a parallel understanding of the motivations and reactions of the audience.<sup>xii</sup> Developing some of these multiple strands, this essay is concerned with the circumstances that gave rise to a portrait, both original and engraved,<sup>xiii</sup> and with the role of portraits, intended or otherwise, within the career development, connections formation, institutional associations and reputation building of the individuals depicted. It also considers the relationship between the portrait in print form and other types of printed output, both images and text, in which professional men were involved. The essay is focused on three individuals. The first is James Beattie (1735 –1803) professor in Aberdeen, a poet and philosopher, who visited London in the second half of the century in search of patronage and to make contacts with publishers and became embroiled in a

failed attempt at celebrity creation through portraiture. The second is Robert Mylne (1734-1811), architect and bridge engineer, son of an Edinburgh builder, who after a bruising early career encounter with the London print satirists, carefully managed his portrait image and that of a key patron. And, finally, there is Dr Matthew Baillie (1761-1823) morbid anatomist and court physician, nephew to the Hunter brothers, who threatened legal action to prevent the public distribution of an unauthorized engraved portrait during his lifetime, but also orchestrated his posthumous reputation through carefully chosen images and institutional bequests.

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Great men (and women), members of the patrician elite, were ever the subject matter of great public pictures. But as Solkin has shown, there were changes in the pictorial conventions of male portraiture in the mid eighteenth century as portrait artists in search of clients encountered aspirational non-elites in search of public recognition and a public that was eager to see them.<sup>xiv</sup> Joshua Reynolds was the master of celebrity creation through portraits on public display as originals and printed reproductions.<sup>xv</sup> Often making use of innovative compositions, they included actors and courtesans, politicians and war heroes, exotic visitors to Britain and British explorers overseas, the famous and sometimes also the infamous. Reynolds' portrait of his friend James Beattie, which was painted in 1773 at the suggestion of the artist, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1774 and published as an engraving in 1775, offers an insight to the role that portraiture played in the career and reputation of a Scottish professional man who visited London in 1773 to

petition for a royal pension on the back of his sudden fame as a philosopher and poet. It also shows that an adverse audience reaction could temper a man's enthusiasm for portraiture thereafter.

Beattie's London diary reveals the daily social round that he and his wife pursued in order to gain an introduction to court and to the king, making use of his Scottish and literary networks and his aristocratic and clerical patrons.<sup>xvi</sup> Senior figures in the Anglican Church were especially energetic in Beattie's support because of his advocacy of traditional Christian faith in the *Essay on Truth*, published in 1770, an attack on the 'infidelity' of the times and on the writings of David Hume in particular. This, joined with Beattie's easy manners and skills in the 'art of pleasing', and his favouring of English church rituals over Scottish, led to frequent suggestions from his friends in high church places that he should take the cloth and offers of lucrative parish livings. Beattie declined, preferring his university duties in Aberdeen during term time and regular visits to his friends in England out of term.<sup>xvii</sup>

The first attempt at a portrait of Beattie from the Reynolds family came not from Sir Joshua, but from his sister Frances, who kept house for her unmarried brother and maintained a portrait practice of her own, with some of her subjects also reproduced as prints.<sup>xviii</sup> She was part of the bluestocking circle associated with Beattie's confidant and patron Elizabeth Montagu, and was friends with many of Beattie's other friends. Beattie recorded the circumstances in his diary for 3 June 1773.

I called on Miss Reynolds to thank her for interesting herself so warmly in my affairs. She asked it of me as a favour, that I would sit to her for my picture, to which I consented most thankfully; and I sat to her about half an hour. She wishes to engage her brother Sir Joshua to take another picture of me, and is sure he will do it, if he can by any means find time...<sup>xix</sup>

Sitting for Frances Reynolds became a regular sociable occurrence in the weeks that followed, she even took a sketch of Mrs Beattie for inclusion in a group portrait of her women friends. Sir Joshua first proposed his portrait in early August following the installation of both men to honorary doctorates at the University of Oxford, an event that saw a ‘standing ovation’ for Beattie on account of his *Essay on Truth*.<sup>xx</sup> In high spirits (for following a meeting with the King, the royal pension was now secure) Beattie wrote to Mrs Montagu on 21 August to describe both his presentation at court, and this second portrait.

I have another piece of news to tell you, which will give you pleasure. Sir Joshua Reynolds...has planned out a sort of allegorical picture, representing the triumph of truth over scepticism and infidelity. At one corner of the picture, in the foreground, stands your humble servant, as large as life, arrayed in a doctor of laws’ gown and band, with his “Essay on Truth” under his arm. At some little distance appears Truth, habited as an angel, with a sun on her breast, who is to act such a part with respect to the sceptic and infidel, as shall show, that they are not willing to see the light; though they have the opportunity. My face (for which I sat) is finished, and is a most striking likeness; only, I believe, it will be allowed, that sir Joshua is more liberal in the articles of spirit and elegance than his friend

Nature thought proper to be...sir Joshua is determined to complete the whole with all expedition, and to have a print done from it. He is very happy in this invention, which is entirely his own. Indeed, if I had been qualified to give any hints on the subject (which is not at all the case,) you will readily believe, that I would not be instrumental in forwarding a work that is so very flattering to me. The picture will appear at the Exhibition; but whether sir Joshua means to keep it, or dispose of it, is not, I believe, determined.<sup>xxi</sup>

The picture was unusual for its use of allegory in a portrait of a professional man.<sup>xxii</sup> It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1774, titled *The Triumph of Truth, with the Portrait of a Gentleman*. The subject matter, the title, and, indeed, the initial approach to Beattie, were design as a complement to the sitter and to add to his reputation, as well as being a device that allowed the artist to capitalise on the celebrity of the subject through print sales and further commissions. It is possible that Reynolds also hoped for some amelioration in his own reputation for irreligion and scandal through his association with Beattie and Christian ‘truth’. It is certain that Reynolds intended that the portrait be read as an attack on ‘sceptic’ Voltaire and ‘infidel’ Hume, whose images, thinly disguised as allegory, were included in the portrait. But none of these hopes was realised, for the picture generated criticism of artist and sitter, the former for his ridiculed suggestion that Beattie was a greater philosopher than Hume or Voltaire, the latter for vanity.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Beattie’s enthusiasm for his own portrait collapsed when public exhibition was met with derision. Oliver Goldsmith, a close friend of Reynolds, was one of the critics; another



was 'Mr Mason', a Cambridge-based literary clergyman and executor of Thomas Gray the poet, with whom Beattie was acquainted. Writing to Mrs Montagu from Aberdeen in 1774 -

he [Mason] has found a new subject of concern, in this allegorical picture by sir Joshua Reynolds, which, he thinks, can hardly fail to hurt my character in good earnest...If sir Joshua Reynolds thinks more favourably of me that I deserve (which he certainly does,) and if he entertains the same favourable sentiments of my cause which I wish him and all the world to entertain, I should be glad to know from Mr Mason, what there is in all this to fix any blame on *my* character? Indeed, if I had planned this picture, and urged sir Joshua to paint it, and paid him for his trouble, and then had solicited admittance for it into the Exhibition, the world would have had good reason to exclaim against me as a vain coxcomb....<sup>xxiv</sup>

The picture was a critical failure, which meant that Reynolds could not sell it, nor usefully show the piece in his own studio gallery, where a large collection of his works were on display.<sup>xxv</sup> With no purchaser, and the engraving completed – for there were still hopes of a popular market for this allegory on Christian 'truth' - Reynolds offered to gift Beattie the original. Beattie was reluctant to accept.

You desired me, if I did not choose to keep the picture in my own possession, to give it to some one of my best friends. In this view, sir, as well as in others, there is no person who has so good a title to it as yourself, for I fear the world would pronounce me lost to all sense of modesty if I were to adorn my own house with so splendid a memorial of my good fortune.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Frances Reynolds resolved matters with her tactful suggestion that the picture be gifted by the artist to Beattie's son James, a child of six, which the father had no right to refuse. It was finally sent to Aberdeen as the property of James Hay Beattie, to be kept in Beattie's house where it was hidden behind a purpose-made curtain and rarely shown.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Given the problematic history of the original, it is not surprising that the engraving by James Watson, published by John Boydell of Cheapside on 24 August 1775, was little regarded by Beattie.<sup>xxviii</sup> Beattie gave costly presentation copies of his books to supporters, but the engraving was never gifted to friends and patrons in the way that sitters commonly used such prints.<sup>xxix</sup> Indeed, he seems to have formed a phobia to his own image, for a few years later, fear of renewed criticism prompted the following remarks to the Duchess of Gordon.

I have sent a small print, which my bookseller, in the abundance of his wisdom, and contrary to my advice, is determined to prefix to a new edition of my "Essays on Poetry, Music &c." This figure, designed by Angelica, is certainly very noble – much more so than I expected; and is intended to represent Socrates in prison, and under sentence of death, composing a hymn in honour of Apollo. But I am afraid, that the readers will neither guess at the meaning, nor see any connection between it and the book: in which case, they will no doubt suppose that the author has prefixed his own image.<sup>xxx</sup>

Despite his success and frequent visits to London, later portraits of Beattie were modest and few. There was a Tassie medallion in 1787, probably modelled in London during

Beattie's lengthy summer visit that year, possibly without his knowledge or consent. The medallion was listed in Tassie's catalogue of 'modern personages' in 1791 and was supplied to order, but Beattie did not own one.<sup>xxxii</sup> There was a poorly executed miniature in later life, painted in Aberdeen by a local artist along with a miniature of Beattie's son.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Both this and the Tassie were engraved for use in posthumous published editions of Beattie's works. The portrait of Beattie's son was engraved at his father's request following the young man's early death and published as the frontispiece to the 1799 edition of *The Minstrel*, the author's lasting source of fame.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Another engraving showing the young James Beattie, which was published in the *European Magazine* in 1801, has no known original.<sup>xxxv</sup> The painting by Frances Reynolds was seemingly never finished or it was lost.

Beattie may have fought shy of the portrait artist following his first exposure to public exhibition, yet he was, in common with many contemporaries, a significant collector of engraved portraits of friends and patrons, some gifted, others purchased, and most designed for use as furniture prints to decorate his house.<sup>xxxvi</sup> His acquisition of prints is detailed in his diary and daybook beginning with the life-changing London visit of 1773. On 6 June 1773, Beattie called on the Archbishop of York, Robert Hay Drummond, a younger brother of Lord Kinnoul, one of Beattie's patrons in Scotland. 'Found him busy in showing certain drawings to his children and taking occasion from them to convey moral instruction....He made me a present of three prints one of himself, one of his daughter deceased, and one of his two sons (from a picture by West).'<sup>xxxvii</sup> The first of these, engraved in 1761, shows Drummond seated and holding the purse of the

Chancellor of the Order of Garter. It was painting by Reynolds, engraved by J. Watson and published by Robert Sayer. Dressed in the robes of office and the collar of the garter, the engraving was inscribed ‘The Honourable and Rt Rev. Father in God Robert Drummond DD. Lord Bishop of Sarum and Chancellor of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, June 11 1761. Archbishop of York Oct 23 1761’, and was designed to mark an appointment to high office.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Beattie also recorded the purchase of prints including landscapes and maps, sometimes in London, sometimes ordered through his local bookseller in Aberdeen, along with the cost of framing gifted prints.<sup>xxxviii</sup> One of the latter was a portrait of Mrs Montagu, which cost the unusually large sum of 8s 6d to frame and glaze, testimony to the esteem due to his influential friend. Published in 1776, the print included the text ‘From an original painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the possession of His Grace the Primate of Ireland, to whom this plate is inscribed by his Grace’s much oblig’d and obedt servt. John Raphael Smith, published April 10, 1776’.<sup>xxxix</sup> Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, was Mrs Montagu’s cousin, and like the Archbishop of York, was one of Beattie’s patrons. His own engraved portrait of the previous year was inscribed ‘The Most Reverend Richard Robinson DD: Archbishop of Armagh Primate and Metropolitan of all Ireland. Engraved from an original painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the possession of Mrs Montagu to whom this plate is inscribed by her oblig’d and obedient humble servant John Raphael Smith. Pub. 13 Sept 1775.’<sup>xl</sup> The reciprocal sponsorship and dedication was possibly designed to diffuse accusations of vanity, though images of the Anglican clergy

in office were common and popular, and the English clergy were major consumers of prints.<sup>xli</sup>

Like those gifted by the Archbishop of York, most of the prints that Beattie acquired were memorial portraits produced soon after the death of the subject. They included Lord Lyttelton, a close friend from his London literary circle who died in 1773, Dr John Gregory, Professor of Medicine at Kings College Aberdeen, one of his Scottish friends, who died in 1777, and the Earl of Errol who died in the mid-1780s.<sup>xlii</sup> In the 1790s he had a final burst of print purchasing with portraits of the King and Queen and another depicting Dr Francis Willis, the king's physician who 'cured' the monarch of madness.<sup>xliii</sup> This last image costing 6s to buy and 2s 6d for the glass and frame, was acquired by Beattie just a few weeks before the death of his chronically ill son and probably reflected his hopes for a cure closer to home.

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Robert Mylne moved in overlapping social circles with those of James Beattie. Indeed, Beattie's landlord in London in 1773 was Mylne's wife's father, Robert Boyne Home, a Scottish military surgeon, whose house in Suffolk Street was recommended by 'Mrs Hunter' the poet, who was Home's daughter, Mylne's sister-in-law and one of Mrs Montagu's literary friends.<sup>xliv</sup> Mylne was also connected to Matthew Baillie, our third case study, again through his sister-in-law Anne Hunter, who was married to John Hunter

and hence the aunt of Matthew Baillie. This, in miniature, was how Scottish professional networks in London were formed.

Robert Mylne was the eldest son of a master mason with a long established family involvement in the Scottish building industry.<sup>xlv</sup> Determined to better his prospects through an architects training, he travelled to Europe in 1754, with only reluctant parental support and limited finances, and set about the usual programme of study and social networking among ‘grand tourists’ in preparation for a future career. Mylne took an extended visit to Sicily in 1757 as companion to Richard Phelps, a wealthy connoisseur, and he enrolled in Rome’s St Luke’s Academy, where in 1758 he won the Silver Medal for architecture. On returning to Britain, and settling in London to try his luck, Mylne’s career got off to a flying start when he won a public competition in 1760 to design a new bridge over the Thames at Blackfriars. He was constantly employed thereafter in a well-rewarded practice that embraced country houses throughout Britain, hospitals and other institutional buildings in both London and Edinburgh, public surveyorships that included St Paul’s Cathedral and civil engineering projects.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Robert Mylne was a successful London architect at a time when the profession demanded more than skilful design to make a career.<sup>xlvii</sup> In an age when architecture was closely connected to art and taste, and the production of aesthetically pleasing drawings was required of fashionable architects, Robert Mylne’s career relied on pictures in several ways. He was a good draftsman and supplemented his income in Rome through giving

drawing lessons to young grand tourists. He also made strategic use of pictures in London, including portraits, to forge connections and advance his career.

Mylne commissioned drawings of his first big project under construction, which were engraved and published in 1760 and 1766, and reprinted as a series of seven plates in 1787 under the title *Plans, Elevations and Sections of the Machines and Centering used in erecting Black-Friars Bridge, drawn and engraved by R. Baldwin, Clerk of Works*. He also commissioned a drawing and engraving of the bridge by Piranesi. All undertakings were designed to keep the ten-year bridge-building project and the architect in the public eye once the initial competition publicity had died down. Robert Mylne was a friend of Giambattista Piranesi from his time in Rome. He invited the artist to London in 1761 and supported him – even as far as paying for his pencils - while the Italian drew the bridge, which was engraved in Rome and published in 1766.<sup>xlviii</sup> The cost was over £70, but the venture was a success. Mylne presented gifts of this print to friends and patrons throughout his career and it was widely collected, particularly among Scots in London who were delighted with their countryman's success.<sup>xlix</sup> Others, however, were not so pleased, not least the other aspirants to the Blackfriars contract. Being a successful Scotsman in London at the high point of anti-Bute inspired Scotophobia and one, moreover, who trumpeted his own success, inevitably generated a backlash which took the form of a Grub Street-published and viciously scatological satirical print of Mylne – described as 'the Puffing PHAENOMENON' - and his backers in the Blackfriars scheme.<sup>1</sup>

Lucrative public contracts, were invariably political and contested, so perhaps the satire, or something like it, would have appeared irrespective of Mylne's tendency to 'puff'. The criticism doubtless hurt, but this early career success opened many subsequent doors, and its importance for Mylne was highlighted in the mid-1770s when the architect commissioned a portrait and private engraving of John Paterson, his main supporter in the Blackfriars competition and in subsequent payment disputes.<sup>li</sup> Reynolds painted John Paterson, lawyer and chairman of the New Bridge Committee, in 1775 in a half-length, seated portrait wearing civic dress and holding papers relating to the financing of Blackfriars Bridge.<sup>lii</sup> Mylne paid £36 15s for the original, which he had framed and gifted to Paterson's daughter, and a further £26 5s for the engraving. He purchased 'Mr Holders plate' for £5 5s and paid £4 for 'throwing prints.'<sup>liii</sup> At the same time, Mylne hosted a series of lavish dinners and entertainments for the Chamberlain's Office and the committees of the New River Company and St Paul's, on which Paterson sat and for which Mylne had undertaken many well-rewarded contracts.<sup>liv</sup> The picture and the parties were connected to the seventy-year-old Paterson's retirement from public life.

John Paterson (1705-89), the grandson of the last Archbishop of Glasgow and a second-generation Scotsman in London, was one of those powerful if low-key professional fixers, financial managers and information gatekeepers, that were important political players in the eighteenth-century British capital. He was Deputy for the ward of Farringdon Within, and according to an early nineteenth-century account, 'he projected various useful plans for the improvement of the city and was the principal means of the streets being paved with Scotch granite...'<sup>lv</sup> He was an political crony of Pitt and member



of parliament for Ludgershall in Wiltshire in the 1760s and served for many years as clerk to the Company of Barber Surgeons. ~~and~~ A print of the portrait that Mylne commissioned was displayed in the Company's court room.<sup>lvi</sup> He was a friend of William Hunter, who also owned a copy of the printed portrait.<sup>lvii</sup> He was well connected and rich and used his wealth to invest in a picture collection, gifting a Vandyke to the Company of Barber Surgeons on his death.<sup>lviii</sup> The elegiac text that embellished his engraved portrait was taken from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* – 'His life was gentle, and the elements so mix'd in him, that nature might stand up and say to all the world. This was a man.'<sup>lix</sup>

Not long after the Paterson portrait, Robert Mylne, now in mid-career, also commissioned an engraved portrait of himself, based on a drawing by Brompton taken in Rome many years before, and he used this as a calling card to advertise his practice and as a gift for friends and patrons.<sup>lx</sup> It was engraved in Paris by Italian engraver Vangellisti, who charged 'twenty Louis d'or'. Mylne's old friend Charles Whiteford, a former member of the Royal Society in London, who was a merchant and commercial agent in Paris and a regular source of European goods for the Mylne household, organized the commission.<sup>lxi</sup> In suggesting Vangellisti for the task, Mylne was advised that 'for a specimin of his abilities I refer you to the London print shops where you will see the "Death of Pyramus and Thisbe" after Guido.' Whiteford assured Mylne 'I have given him the proper directions about it being simple and unadorned...' and also reported that Signor Vangellisti 'has been at London has seen Blackfriars Bridge and being a man of taste of course admired it...'<sup>lxii</sup>

Mylne's portrait is a cameo profile of a classically styled handsome young man with short natural hair, a style that he would not have worn in life either in youth or at the time of the engraving, when he was stout, middle aged and respectably be-wigged. Mylne's reasons for commissioning this image in 1782 are not recorded, though it clearly referenced his St Luke's medal success in Rome. The classical profile was used by other architects and was popular among professional Scots in London, partly because of fellow Scotsman James Tassie's output of commercial medallion portraits of modern Scottish subjects.<sup>lxiii</sup> By being distanced from the present, this image of the architect as he once was, might have been designed to deflect accusations of vanity, an inference that Mylne's wish to have the print 'simple and unadorned' would support.

Simple and unadorned is also descriptive of the second and final portrait of Robert Mylne. This was a modest half-length profile in contemporary day dress by Charles Dance, architect and a friend of Mylne's from their student days in Italy, who made a pencil sketch of the now ageing Scotsman in 1795 along with many similar portraits of his friends, some, including that of Mylne, engraved by William Daniels and published between 1808 and 1814.<sup>lxiv</sup> The circumstances behind the original portraits were more connected with the sociability of the artist than the aspirations of the sitters.<sup>lxv</sup> The published prints were of a distinguished circle of mostly well-established older men and were not designed for individual career promotion. This and the earlier Brompton/Vengellisti were the only portraits of Mylne taken in life, a modest visual record when compared with contemporary architects.<sup>lxvi</sup> It is interesting to speculate on

why this was so. Deference arising out of a comparatively humble social background is probably not the reason, since Mylne devoted both time and money to celebrating his family of master masons to the Crown in Scotland through antiquarian publications and memorials to generations past.<sup>lxvii</sup> A lack of opportunity or funds is also unlikely since he had both in abundance. Calvinistic tendencies in his mental makeup may have contributed in some part to the want of portraits, which is hinted in a comment that he wrote to his brother from Italy in 1758, speculating on how he should project his identity in a hoped-for London career and favouring a Quaker-like appearance.<sup>lxviii</sup> But probably a greater influence was the impact of the highly public criticism for ‘puffing’ that he received at the time of the Blackfriars Bridge contract, for Mylne, as with Beattie, quickly discovered at an early stage in his London career that reputation born out of professional success was easily damaged by uncontrolled or poorly chosen public images.

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Matthew Baillie, son of a Scottish clergyman, began life with greater opportunities to shine on the public stage than his uncle-by-marriage, Robert Mylne, and he also had a greater awareness from the outset of how public exposure could undermine esteem. As the nephew of John and William Hunter, he was destined from an early age to follow them into the London medical world. His launch into a physician’s practice was smoothed by an advantageous marriage to Sophia Denman, daughter of a fashionable English obstetrician and by his considerable inheritance from William Hunter.<sup>lxix</sup> Baillie had both a family reputation to live up to and his own reputation to nurture and protect. His uncles, through their museums, lectures and publications, were public celebrities and

the subject of several commercially sold portrait engraving, but they were also criticised and ridiculed by print satirists.<sup>lxx</sup>

Familiar with the dangers of print, Baillie avoided becoming the subject of a commercial engraved portrait during his lifetime, though attempts were made towards at least one publication which he successfully blocked with threatened legal action. His authorised biographer, in a memoir published shortly after Baillie's death, described the circumstances.

He shrunk from having any likeness of himself...intruded upon the public.

Having consented to sit for his picture to Hoppner, as a present to his sisters, a circumstance arose from it, which gave him great uneasiness. He was astonished to find that this picture was put into the hands of an engraver, without his permission. He was very angry at this, having a particular dislike to the idea of seeing his face in the window of a print shop! On further enquiry he found that the engraving was already completed. His feelings of justice would not allow him to make the engraver lose the fruits of his labour entirely, he therefore purchased the copperplate, and permitted only a few copies to be taken from it, which were presented to his friends...<sup>lxxi</sup>

The engraving by Turner, after the original by Hoppner painted in 1808, shows him seated wearing plain dress and natural hair consistent with the early nineteenth-century trend towards professional sartorial sobriety that Baillie himself espoused - 'he seemed to have a particular dislike to the affectation and peculiarities of dress displayed by some medical men, as derogatory to the respectability of their profession.'<sup>lxxii</sup> Though not

available for public scrutiny during life, the image was widely reproduced as a book illustration in medical texts and biography following Baillie's death.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

Though wary of the print seller and of being too much in the public eye, Matthew Baillie was master of the art of forging connections and enhancing his professional reputation through strategic commissions of original portraits from major artists for gifting to patrons and institutions. In 1806 he commissioned a portrait of himself from Thomas Lawrence, for which he paid £36. 15s, and presented this to his greatest supporter within the Scottish-London medical world, Dr David Pitcairn, who was also the dedicatee of Baillie's most important published work, the lavishly illustrated *Morbid Anatomy* of 1802.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Pitcairn's widow gave the picture to the Royal College of Physicians in the 1830s. In 1812, Baillie was the subject of a classically styled marble bust by Joseph Nollekens, for which he paid £126. And in 1817, Baillie paid William Owen fifty guineas for a full-face portrait of himself dressed in his scarlet M.D. gown, which he presented to his old college Balliol in Oxford in 1823.<sup>lxxv</sup>

Baillie owned the Nollekens bust during his lifetime and it is not clear why it was commissioned and where it was kept, though it was probably displayed with similar busts in one of the public rooms of his London home. It seems likely that the bust was intended for an institutional setting to mark a key professional achievement, but Baillie suffered several disappointments in his career roundabout the time of the commission. He did not get a hoped-for knighthood despite prestigious crown appointments, and though a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians from 1809 (to which organisation he

made many generous bequests) he never served as president. Baillie was sensitive to his public reputation in life and tried to control it after death, to which end he wrote an unpublished autobiography in 1818 which formed the basis of all subsequent accounts of Baillie.<sup>lxxvi</sup> It is possible that the Nollekens bust was intended from the outset as the key posthumous portrait image for it formed the model for Baillie's monument in Westminster Abbey, modelled by Chantry, and a few months after his death in 1823, the Royal College of Physicians paid Chantry 100 guineas for a copy in marble. Plaster versions were also produced and the bust was copied as a posthumous miniature and engraving at the request of Baillie's widow.<sup>lxxvii</sup>

The production of images of a loved one after death could be a complex process and private grief was sometimes turned into a business opportunity for the artist and his associates when the subject was well known. When Baillie died in 1823, Sophia Baillie asked Thomas Lawrence to produce a drawing of her husband based on the Nollekens bust, which she thought a good likeness, and she also requested that the drawing be engraved and a small number of prints be made for distribution within the family. She further requested that Lawrence arrange the commission of a portrait for herself based on the bust from miniaturist Charlotte Jones, a favourite in court circles. The engraving by 'Mr Bromley jun', a little known figure, cost 35 guineas.<sup>lxxviii</sup> Initially just a dozen prints were taken, but Lawrence raised the possibility of commercial publication following a request for a print, made to him and conveyed to Mrs Baillie, from one of Baillie's former patients at court. Lawrence suggested his own publisher for the enterprise, Hurst and Robinson, doubtless with the expectation that some part of the profit would come his

way, and Mrs Baillie agreed.<sup>lxxix</sup> The image was published in 1825, the year that saw the first publication of Matthew Baillie's collected *Works* prefaced with an authorised biography and engraved frontispiece based on the long delayed 1808 Hoppner portrait.

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This account of the personal and career circumstances in which three professional Scots in London, along with some of their friends and associates, came to be the subject of the portrait artist and engraver, suggests several concluding observations.

As far as timing was concerned, a private portrait required no justification other than the inclinations of the individual concerned, but a public portrait, original or engraved – and even private prints entered a public existence – did have to be justified in some way that enhanced the interests and reputation of the subject and his family, or at least did no damage. Professional men were careful in the cultivation of their reputations because their incomes relied on it, and a damaged character was hard to restore. Scottish professional men were doubly careful because of the prejudices against them. Courting celebrity through a public portrait could be dangerous, but a print in the right hands and viewed in the correct manner could enhance a reputation. Hence, the print distribution process, including the avoidance of 'print shops' through limited-edition private

engraving and the personal ownership (and sometimes destruction) of plates, was carefully managed by many professional men to protect their reputations from uncontrolled public scrutiny, for a mis-timed portrait could generate accusations of vanity, as James Beattie discovered to his cost and Matthew Baillie feared.

Given the sensitivities attached to ‘timing’, it is not surprising that successful original portraits were commonly on display in professional settings and thereby celebrated the institution as much as the subject. Moreover, most successful engraved portraits were produced either at the end of a long career, or at death, in celebration of a life-time of achievement now completed, even though they sometimes represented an image of the subject as a young man. These conclusions based on the London portraits detailed in this essay confirm the findings of a study of engraved portraits of professional men based on originals by Henry Raeburn in early nineteenth century Edinburgh, where the average age of living or recently deceased subjects at the time of engraving was in their seventies, though the images themselves were often based on those of men painted in their prime.<sup>lxxx</sup> Thus, far from being part of a popular cult of celebrity and fashionable novelty, as the work of Solkin or Postle would imply, the public consumption of portraits of professional men was more likely to represent an interest in and respect for institutional authority, continuity and the past. The memorial print was probably the largest category of portrait depicting professional men in Britain c. 1760-1830, with the rise of such images paralleling the growing output of published obituaries, memoirs and posthumous biographies in recognition of ‘exemplary lives’.<sup>lxxxi</sup>



Accusation of personal vanity in the subject of a portrait was a constant danger and could be avoided through the commissioning process, where the involvement of a ‘disinterested’ third party (neither sitter nor artist) was articulated through the inscription on an engraving. Other aspects of content made a difference to how an image was received, including the wearing of official dress and a timing that was connected to appointment to office, which meant the office and the ideals it represented, not the individual, formed the real subject of the print. This may account for the considerable output and popularity of portraits of the clergy and judiciary (dominant groups among Raeburn-based engravings) both associated with multiple layers of office holding and with the twin pillars of the eighteenth-century British state, faith and the law.

In the construction of personal identity through portraiture, the subject normally took great care over how he was represented and eighteenth-century professional men mostly gravitated towards conservative pictorial conventions and modest poses, particularly those associated with scholarship such as the classical profile or bust. But following death, a family, often with a financial interest in the intellectual capital generated by the subject, or with their own professional careers to pursue, might have changing ideas on portrait identity. Robert Mylne provides an illustration, for though his own chosen and carefully managed portrait image in life was that of the classically styled youth evocative of high art and good taste, his posthumous public image and associated reputation was to change.

Robert Mylne, fashionable eighteenth century architect, was the subject of a portrait and print published over fifty years after his death purporting to represent him in company with fellow ‘Distinguished Men of Science of Great Britain Living in A.D.1807-8, Assembled in the Library of the Royal Institution’. Based on existing individual portraits, for the event itself had never occurred, the picture was begun in 1856 and was published as an engraving in 1862 to accompany a volume of biographical essays on the subjects depicted. The engraver and publisher was William Walker, a successful London businessman of Scottish background who began his career in early nineteenth-century Edinburgh and engraved some of the best-known prints based on Raeburn originals.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Walker was responsible for several historical group engravings and ‘Distinguished Men of Science’ was his last and most ambitious project.<sup>lxxxiii</sup> The portrait contains many professional Scots in London and is thought to be a celebration of the anniversary of the 1707 Act of Union.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Alongside such heroes of the industrial age as James Watt, it depicts four civil engineers, including Mylne. This image, along with the best selling companion *Memoirs*, was decisive in shifting Mylne’s posthumous reputation from architect and ‘man of taste’ to engineer and ‘man of science’. Mylne’s Victorian reinvention – in which his son and grandson, both engineers, played a part – has shaped subsequent accounts of one who in life had sought an entirely different identity through pictures.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

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- <sup>i</sup> H. Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London, Routledge, 1989). P. J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions, 1700-1850* (London, Routledge 1989).
- <sup>ii</sup> S. Nenadic, 'Introduction', *Scots in London in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. S. Nenadic (New Jersey, Bucknell University Press, 2010).
- <sup>iii</sup> J. Woodall, ed., *Portraiture. Facing the Subject* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997). M. Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth Century England* (Newhaven and London, Yale University Press, 1993). L. Peltz, 'Engraved portrait heads and the rise of extra-illustration: the Eton correspondence of the Rev. James Granger and Richard Bull, 1769-1774.' *Walpole Society*, 66 (2004) p. 1-162. S. Nenadic, 'The Enlightenment in Scotland and the popular passion for portraits', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 21:2 (1998) p.175-192.
- <sup>iv</sup> M. Pointon, 'Portrait painting as a business enterprise in London in the 1780s.' *Art History* 7:2 (1994) p. 187-205. M. Postle, ed., *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity* (London, Tate Publishing, 2005).
- <sup>v</sup> L. Jordanova, 'Medical men: 1780-1820', in *Portraiture. Facing the Subject*. L. Jordanova, *Defining Features: Scientific and Medical Portraits, 1660-2000* (London, Reaktion, 2000).
- <sup>vi</sup> T. Friedman, *James Gibbs* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1984). Iain G. Brown, "'The resemblance of a great genius.'" Commemorative portraits of Robert Adam', *Burlington Magazine*, 120 (1978) p. 444-51.
- <sup>vii</sup> For examples see, D. Solkin, *Painting for Money: the Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1993).

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- <sup>viii</sup> See, R. Porter, *Health for Sale. Quackery in England, 1660-1850* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1989). V. I. C. Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth Century London* (London, Atlantic, 2006).
- <sup>ix</sup> Solkin, *Painting for Money*; Postle, *Joshua Reynolds*.
- <sup>x</sup> P. Fara, 'Framing evidence: Scientific biography and portraiture', in *The History and Poetics of Scientific Biography*, ed. T. Soderqvist (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007). S. Nenadic, 'Raeburn's engraved portraits and the construction of 'Enlightened' identities', in *Henry Raeburn: Critical Reception and International Reputation*, ed., S. Lloyd and V. Coltman (Edinburgh, forthcoming).
- <sup>xi</sup> For background see, Nenadic, *Scots in London*.
- <sup>xii</sup> L. Jordanova, 'Image matters', *The Historical Journal*, 51:3 (2008) p.777-91.
- <sup>xiii</sup> On engravings, see A. Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking. An Introduction to the History and Techniques* (London, British Museum, 1980). T. Clayton, *The English Print, 1688-1802* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1997).
- <sup>xiv</sup> D. H. Solkin, 'Great pictures or great men? Reynolds, male portraiture and the power of art', *Oxford Art Journal* 9:2 (1986) p. 42-9.
- <sup>xv</sup> T. Clayton, "'Figures of fame": Reynolds and the printed image', in *Joshua Reynolds*, ed. Postle.
- <sup>xvi</sup> *James Beattie's London Diary 1773*, ed. R. S. Walker (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1946).
- <sup>xvii</sup> N. Aston, 'Anglicization or Anglicanisation? James Beattie in London', in *Scots in London*, ed. Nenadic.

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- <sup>xviii</sup> R. Wendorf and C. Ryskamp, 'A bluestocking friendship: The letters of Elizabeth Montagu and Frances Reynolds in the Princeton collection', *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 41 (1979-80) p. 173-80.
- <sup>xix</sup> *Beattie's Diary*, p.46.
- <sup>xx</sup> *ibid*, p.68-9
- <sup>xxi</sup> *The Letters of James Beattie Chronologically arranged from Sir W. Forbes' Collection* vol 1 (London 1820) p. 129-30.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> J. Northcott, *Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds Knt* (London 1813) p. 158-60, 165-6.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> *Letters of James Beattie*, p. 163.
- <sup>xxv</sup> M. Hallett, 'Reynolds, celebrity, and the exhibition space', in *Joshua Reynolds*, ed., Postle.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Quoted in M. Forbes, *Beattie and His Friends* (Westminster, A. Constable & co., 1904) p.124.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> *ibid*.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> J. Challoner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits. A Descriptive Catalogue* (London 1883) vol 4 p. 1419.
- <sup>xxix</sup> *James Beattie's Daybook 1773-98* (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1948) p. 57. 31 Dec 1773 paid £10 5s 10d for presentation copies of *The Minstrel* and *Essay on Truth*.
- <sup>xxx</sup> *Letters of James Beattie* vol 2. p. 75. 23 May 1780 Letter from James Beattie to Duchess of Gordon.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> 'Catalogue of medallions representing modern personages modelled by James and William Tassie or existing in their enamel past [1791]' appended to, J. M. Gray, *James*

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and William Tassie. *A Biographical and Critical Sketch* (Edinburgh, 1894). J. Holloway, *James Tassie 1735-1799* (Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland, 1986).

<sup>xxxii</sup> Reproduced in *Beattie's Diary*.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> F. O'Donoghue, *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum* (London, British Museum, 1908) vol 1 p. 144.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Reproduced in *Beattie's Diary*.

<sup>xxxv</sup> S. Nenadic, 'Print collecting and popular culture in eighteenth century Scotland.' *History* 82 (1997) p. 203-22.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> *Beattie's Diary*, p.49.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Challoner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits*, vol 4, p. 1506.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> *Beattie's DayBook*.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Challoner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits* vol 3, p. 1285. Smith ran his business from 10 Bateman Buildings in Soho Square.

<sup>xl</sup> *ibid.* p. 1286.

<sup>xli</sup> A survey of print sales catalogues held in the British Museum Dept. of Prints and Drawings suggests that Church of England clergymen were the largest identifiable professional group among major print collectors.

<sup>xlii</sup> Detailed in *Beattie's Daybook*.

<sup>xliii</sup> *ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>xliv</sup> *Beattie's Diary* p.30.

<sup>xlv</sup> Mylne is curiously under-researched. The best study, as yet unpublished, is R. J. Woodley, 'Robert Mylne' Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1998. See also, R. Ward,

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*The Man Who Buried Nelson: the Surprising Life of Robert Mylne* (London, Tempus, 2007).

<sup>xlvi</sup> H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (London, J. Murray, 1978) p.205-6.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA] Mylne Family Papers. Robert Mylne's Diary.

<sup>xlvi</sup> RIBA Mylne Diary. 18 Oct 1763, 'To Mr Hogers for bill drawn by Piranesi, £22. 6s.' 3 Nov 1763, 'For pencils for Piranesi, 15s.' 14 Sept 1765. To Messrs Drummond & Co. for Piranesi's bill, £54.

<sup>xlvi</sup> P. Black, ed., *"My Highest Pleasure" William Hunter's Art Collection* (Glasgow, University of Glasgow, 2007) p.139.

<sup>i</sup> Lewis Walpole Library Collection Online: Print no. 02014. 'Just Arrived from Italy: the Puffing PHAENOMENON with his Fiery Tail turned Bridge builder.' (London 1759).

<sup>li</sup> R. Woodley, "'A very mortifying situation': Robert Mylne's struggle to get paid for Blackfriars Bridge." *Architectural History* 4 (2000) p.172-86

<sup>lii</sup> Challoner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits* vol 4. p. 1561.

<sup>liii</sup> RIBA. Mylne Diary, 1775, 1776.

<sup>liv</sup> RIBA. Mylne Diary 5 December 1776, 'Gave a dinner to the Tradesmen of St Pauls £12 2s.' is a typical entry.

<sup>lv</sup> T. Allen and T. Wright, *The History of the Antiquities of London, Westminster, Southwark and Parts Adjacent*, vol 3. (London 1839) p.489.

<sup>lvi</sup> *ibid.*

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<sup>lvii</sup> Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, Hunter Collections GLAHA 9116. Mezzotint portrait of John Paterson, Esq. 1777.

<sup>lviii</sup> Allen, *History of the Antiquities of London*, p. 489.

<sup>lix</sup> Challoner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits* vol 4. p. 1561.

<sup>lx</sup> Copies can be identified in some of the major print collections that were sold in the early nineteenth century, and it survives in the extant collections of such contemporaries as William Hunter. See, for example, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, *A Catalogue of an Extensive and Valuable Collection of British Portraits of Eminent Persons and Others of Celebrity...The Collection of a Gentleman of Distinction* [Ltnt General Dowdswell] Sold by Mr Dodds, St Martin's Lane London, March 1812.

<sup>lxi</sup> RIBA. Mylne Diary, 19 Feb 1775. Pays £17 11s to Whiteford in Paris for wine.

<sup>lxii</sup> RIBA Myfam/5/35 Letter from C. Whiteford to Robert Mylne, Paris, 22 Oct. 1782.

<sup>lxiii</sup> Holloway, *Tassie*.

<sup>lxiv</sup> For illustrations see National Portrait Gallery online collection.

<sup>lxv</sup> The sittings were described by landscape artist and engraver, Joseph Farington. See, J. Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington, 1788-1821* 16 vols. (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1970-84).

<sup>lxvi</sup> See, J. Fleming, *Robert Adam and his Circle in Edinburgh and Rome* (London, J. Murray, 1962); K. Cruft and A. Fraser, eds. *James Craig, 1744-1795* (Edinburgh, Mercat Press, 1995); J. Harris, *Sir William Chambers: Knight of the Polar Star* (London, Zwemmer, 1970).

<sup>lxvii</sup> RIBA Mylne Diary for 1771 includes drawings for a Mylne family crest and various genealogical details. See also, National Archive of Scotland. GD1/51/47 Letter from



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James Cant to Robert Mylne, Perth 13 Jan 1775 regarding an antiquarian publication on the Mylne family. .

<sup>lxxviii</sup> RIBA. Myfam/4/34. Letter from Robert Mylne to his brother William Mylne, Rome, 23 Sept 1758.

<sup>lxxix</sup> M. Baillie ‘Autobiography’, in *The Life and Works of Matthew Baillie*, ed. F. Crainz (Rome, **PelitiAssociati**, 1995).

<sup>lxxx</sup> A. Keith, ‘A discourse on the portraits and personality of John Hunter’, *British Medical Journal* 1 (1928) p. 205-9. Black, *My Highest Pleasure*. Jordanova, *Defining Features*.

<sup>lxxxi</sup> *The Works of Matthew Baillie M.D. to which is Prefixed an Account of His Life, Collected from Authentic Sources*, by James Wardrop, Surgeon Extraordinary to the King. 2 vols. (London 1825) vol 1. p. 46-7.

<sup>lxxxii</sup> *ibid.* p.47.

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> See, for example, T. Pettigrew, *Medical Portrait Gallery: Biographical Memoirs of the Most Celebrated Physicians, Surgeons etc who have Contributed to the Advancement of Medical Science* 4 vols. (London 1838-40).

<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Baillie, ‘Autobiography’ p.3.

<sup>lxxxv</sup> Crainz, *Life and Works*, p. 165-67.

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> S. Nenadic, ‘Writing medical lives – creating posthumous reputations: Dr Matthew Baillie and his family in the nineteenth century.’ *Social History of Medicine Advance Access*. April 8 2010.

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Crainz, *Life and Works*, p. 167.

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<sup>lxxviii</sup> Royal College of Surgeons of London: Hunter Baillie Papers: H-B iii 80. Letters from Sir Thomas Lawrence to Mrs Baillie, 1823-4.

<sup>lxxix</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>lxxx</sup> Nenadic, 'Raeburn's engraved portraits.'

<sup>lxxxii</sup> See, E. Barry, 'From epitaph to obituary: Death and celebrity in eighteenth-century British culture', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 11 (2008) p. 259-75. The exception, and an increasingly important exception at that, was in portraits of military professionals where the driving force was the popular celebration of heroism.

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> D. Alexander, *Henry Raeburn and His Printmakers* (Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland, 2006).

<sup>lxxxiiii</sup> F. M. O'Donoghue, 'William Walker', *DNB online* (2007). Accessed 3.11.10.

<sup>lxxxv</sup> C. MacLeod, 'Distinguished men of science of Great Britain living in 1807-8', *DNB online* (2007). Theme Essay accessed 3.11.2010.

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> For background see, A. Saint, *Architect and Engineer: A Study in Sibling Rivalry* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2008).